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NOTE FOR:

SUBJECT : Comments on Dr. Wheelon

Here are some thoughts covering questions you raised concerning Dr. Wheelon's tenure. I don't know how valuable this might be and I hope you would be tapping a variety of sources. Certainly other people around served him more closely than I.

1. Management of Office and Staff Chiefs and Analysts.

Dr. Wheelon was a brilliant young Deputy Director who was very demanding and had very little patience. He could be brief and abrupt and I think it fair to say the Office Directors and Deputy Directors knew where they stood, at least tacitly. Until just before he left the Agency (for some four or five months) he did not have an assistant mainly because he didn't want one and felt he could operate better without one. (In this regard he got a lot of mileage out of Jack Blake, his Executive Officer, who dealt directly with the Office Directors on issues and problems.) He was a very busy man setting up the Directorate and getting it going and thus as I recall was difficult to see. On the other hand he did have direct confrontations with Office Directors when necessary.

Dr. Wheelon was never one to shy away from problems. In fact, if he saw an issue he was inclined to jump in and stir things up. When he felt changes needed to be made among Office Directors or Deputy Directors he was not reluctant to make moves rather quickly although not without regard for the personal problems that might arise by such moves. During his tenure he did seem to focus his attention on his then small staff working on special projects and NRO type activities. He was personally involved to a large extent with NRO politics. These were, of course, high priority programs and the stakes were high. From time to time Office Directors not associated with the NRO did comment that their work

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apparently was not as important to him as the other. On the other hand, Dr. Wheelon had served as the Director of OSI and was acutely aware of the importance of that office and its publications. He was instrumental in establishing FMSAC and had high regard for the efforts of that office. He had fought hard to have OCS included in the Directorate because of its importance in the field of technology. ORD also was an office in which he had a great deal of interest. These latter reflections tend to indicate that although his time focused on NRO activities he was keenly conscious of all offices within the Directorate and the fact that they constituted a coordinated whole ranging from requirements to R&D to operations.

2. As a Recruiter of Scientific Talents.

While still in his mid-20's, Dr. Wheelon served on senior DoD panels and committees. He was extremely well known within industry and government. His reputation indeed pulled in a number of highly qualified technical people interested in working with him. A domino effect resulted with each of the highly qualified men recruiting other technical people with whom they were familiar. Unlike other Agency recruitment which emphasized the college campus, Dr. Wheelon and his key personnel recruited essentially from industry. Although I don't recall his having taken recruiting trips, I do recall his interviewing certain specialized personnel regardless of what their grade might be. He expected his technical people to recruit and did not blanch at their travelling to do so.

At least three offices felt the impact of his recruitment. [redacted] was hired from industry as the Deputy Director of OCS. [redacted] was to be useful in attracting a better caliber computer person with emphasis on technical analysis rather than straight computer operators. As Director of OSI and also after becoming DD/S&T, Dr. Wheelon placed a great deal of emphasis on the technical backgrounds of the OSI analyst. This was not without its painful aspects since many tried and true OSI analysts had been with the office for some ten years or more, had reached relatively senior positions but had little technical background. They were essentially intelligence analysts. Dr. Wheelon felt OSI analysts should be technically qualified first and should learn the intelligence business on the job.

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OEL was also a target for upgrading technical personnel. OEL had evolved out of certain Agency elements including a sizable number of communications personnel that were essentially less well technically trained. These people generally manned the overseas sites and on a rotation basis were assigned various duties at Headquarters. [redacted] was assigned to OEL I think in 1964 as a second Deputy to George Miller to redirect the efforts of OEL and get stronger technical backing.

One observation I would make is that one hears from time to time that Dr. Wheelon was interested in hiring only PhD's. I can honestly say that my experience with him did not bear this out. He was interested in PhD's because as he said, it served as an indication of the type of disciplined training that he thinks one needs to work in DD/S&T. On the other hand, he fully recognized that this did not ensure outstanding performance and I was personally involved with the termination of several PhD's that did not measure up.

3. Establishing Priorities.

As I mentioned in Item #1, above, Dr. Wheelon was interested in establishing a coordinated Directorate consisting of offices that embodied the total intelligence process. It is fair to say that he spent perhaps an undue amount of time with NRO activities and programs to the concern at times of those offices not so involved but he did not lose sight of the importance of those other offices. In this regard I suppose I would say that he placed primary effort on collection systems, particularly those we were fighting for during the difficult days of Air Force encroachment. Because of his background and interests I think R&D would have been his second priority with intelligence research and production of intelligence following. (This is only an opinion on my part and is based partly perhaps on the amount of time he spent on those areas. I do know he had a great deal of confidence in Dr. Chamberlan, Carl Duckett and Dave Brandwein and for that reason might not have spent much time in the areas of intelligence production.



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